

Exhibit No. 2Date 1-12-07Bill No. SB-80**Honorable Chairman and members of the committee;****My name is Becky Stockton and I reside in Helena, Montana.**

I want to thank the sponsor, Senator Lane Larson for carrying this bill. I believe this is the most important issue in front of the legislature for the 2007 legislature. What is more important than protecting the US Constitutional first amendment rights and the Montana Constitution citizen's rights, which are clearly defined in those documents, than our rights to petition?

There are a couple of areas I would like to point out that needs some work in this bill. On line 13, it mentions that a signature gatherer "may" wear a badge that provides the following information: the word "may" needs to be an absolute. It is either you wear a badge or you don't. If you don't wear a badge how can you expect the person to do (a), (b), or (2) in Section 1? Is the signature gatherer going to embroider the information on his or hers shirt or write the information on a person's shirt with a permanent pen? The word needs to be clearly defined or a judge is going to throw this out.

One line 15: Why are we going to put a signature gatherers name or initials on a badge into law? It may be a common courtesy to do this, but does this need to be in statute? Why does anyone need to know the name of the signature gatherer when the purpose of the procedure at hand is to gather signatures for a petition, not for the registered Montana voter to know who is doing the gathering?

One line 17: Do you know how cumbersome this would be to put on a badge? How can you put all your travel history on one small badge? Take for example: My son is a Marine and is presently deployed there. If he was to come back from Iraq and wanted to gather signatures in Montana immediately upon returning, he would have to declare that he was in 18 different provinces during the six months he was deployed as his prior residence. Where could you fit all that information on a small badge?

Also I would like to mention that my daughter and I were hired to do some research by an attorney in regards to some initiatives. Some items of interest came up while doing the research that pertains to Section 1 on line 17 regarding signature gatherers personal residence. I have made copies of documents for each committee member so that you can follow along. I am very aware that a Great Falls judge threw out more than 140,000 signatures by Montana citizens who wanted their signatures counted. He justified this because he was lead to believe that the addresses were not valid on the affidavits. I find it amazing that not one of those addresses where tested with a simple certified letter to determine there validity.

Take for example: the idea of a persons last 6 months travel history would surely have brought to light that the chief signature gatherers activities on I - 153 (the Governors Initiative to restrict Legislators from lobbying within a 2 year period after retiring from office that was carried by a group called Montanans for Clean Government) were not only from out of state, but were also hired to get John Tester elected. The first exhibit I will show you are three major signature gatherers affidavits for I - 153. The other four gatherers did not collect as many signatures but were out of state. Please read each of their affidavits and their address. They claim they live in Montana. Then look at the 2nd exhibit. It is the campaign disclosure of the Montana Democratic Party on the Federal Elections Commission web site. Carrie Glenn, Annalee Gulley, Brandon Pinette, Jonathan Shapiro, Erika Starr, Erin Taylor-George all have out of state addresses on the

Federal campaign disclosure. Neil Yoke is the only major signature gatherer that has the same address on his affidavit and on the Federal campaign disclosure. But in my research, I happened to come upon his blog on the internet. It was very revealing. This is exhibit #3. The blog entries never mention where his prior address was but it does mention that his wife Beth was very gracious to let him take this job and leave her for seven months. It also mentions he had to travel for many days to get to Montana. There is also mention that while waiting to set up for the Tester campaign, he was informed to collect signatures for the petition. Also for the record, I would like to enter exhibit #4. It is documentation that shows that the five out of seven signature gatherers were also the Montana Democratic Party Field coordinators. The names are highlighted in yellow on this sheet of paper. The next exhibit #5 is the Montanans for Clean Government Political Committee Finance Report. The final exhibit is #6 our excel spread sheet. This is the research that my daughter and I gathered off of the affidavits and petitions. It is pretty explanatory. It does show how many signatures each gatherer collected and shows proof that the seven out of state gatherers on this petition gathered a large sum of the signatures. The total number of signatures for the seven out of state gatherers was 9,475. I just would like to point out to the committee that the information on the Federal Elections Commission would not normally be found by any general citizen. I just happen to come about it by chance and was just shocked when I read the information and how it correlated with the work my daughter and I was doing in reviewing the petitions at the Secretary of State's office. I copied all the months of the Federal Election Commission starting with March through November to prove to the committee that these seven petition gatherers stayed through General Election of 2006.

On exhibit #5, you will also notice that none of the signature gatherer names appear on the political practices reports made by the 153 committee in Montana, so I guess we are left to assume that the campaign considered their work as an in-kind contribution and did not report it. (There is a current loop hole in the law that signature gathers do not have to report their work as an in-kind contribution to political practices.) But I do want to point out that all and I mean all the paid signature gatherers are reported on the Federal Election Commission. You can compare the gatherers on the Excel spread sheet with the gatherers names on the Federal Election Commission.

With all of this in mind I would encourage the sponsor of this bill to consider additional legislation making the "unreported signature gatherers" on these initiative campaigns in Montana report their efforts as an in-kind contribution. This would then require the reporting of their occupation, their legal address, and their employer. And hopefully then the address's on their affidavits would at least match their employment records. This would be much more accessible to the public, and not require long, confusing affidavits, that in some of these cases have several addresses if required to include their every stop in the last 6 months. The reason I say this is the address as defined in SB 80 will have to be uniform for both name badges and affidavits, so that they will be unquestionable the same person.

So lets expand the publics right to know through political practices reporting, and use the affidavits to point the election officials to an individuals current address, so they can be located if questions arise on their signature gathering practices.

Also on page 2, line 10, could we please eliminate the word "assist" or at least define it so that a judge in the future does not define it for the citizens of Montana.

I would like to point out that it is very important to make the process work legitimately for all and at the same time make it easy for the citizens of Montana to be able to run a successful petition drive without a lot of rules and regulations to bind up the process, so I suggest:

1. Please consider adding an amendment to this bill to require that a certified letter must be sent to an address on an affidavit to determine if it is deliverable before declaring an address invalid.
2. I would also encourage you to consider requiring an address that the person can be reach at, not where they have been.
3. I, as a Montana citizen and registered voter of the state of Montana, would like to see more disclosure and transparency in this process.

Thank you for your time.

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